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# STAYING HEALTHY IN THE FRAY

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*The Impact of Crowd Management on Officers  
in the Context of Civil Unrest*

JULY 2021



AN OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS RESOURCE GUIDEBOOK



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This report was prepared by the National Police Foundation (NPF). The National Police Foundation is the oldest nationally known, non-profit, non-partisan, and non-membership driven organization dedicated to advancing policing through innovation and science.

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## INTRODUCTION

The last few years have presented unprecedented challenges, both to our communities and to public safety officers and first responders—especially law enforcement. Current events, including COVID 19, political rhetoric and chaos, societal conflict and division, and attacks on the policing institution, individual officers, and officers’ families, have created a challenging environment where stress and trauma increased exponentially. High-stress police operations such as crowd management during periods of civil unrest is mentally and physically demanding. Crowd management often challenges officers to push their bodies beyond normal limits, leading to poor performance, fatigue, insomnia, and injury. In the summer of 2020, many officers repeatedly worked shifts that, at times, exceeded 12 hours, for 10 to 12 days straight, leaving little time for appropriate nutrition, rest, exercise, recovery, or sleep. Large numbers of arrests, long periods on bicycles, standing or moving in formations, or responding to threats are physically and mentally demanding. In light of the current environment, NPF has developed this brief guide for law enforcement agencies on ways to recognize and protect the physical and mental wellbeing of officers during responses to intense and protracted protests and demonstrations. Both physical and mental stressors are taking a toll on the women and men who have dedicated their lives to protecting our communities.

This guidebook offers educational information and practical considerations for sworn officers of all ranks, particularly frontline officers and mid-level supervisors, as well as their families, to better protect officers’ mental and physical wellbeing during times of heightened stress. Furthermore, this guidebook can be used as a resource by police leaders in promoting healthy organizational cultures that recognize and prioritize officer safety and wellness as an integral part of policing protests—which ultimately can help foster better outcomes for all involved. The content in this guidebook has been curated and derived from a review of research of professional medical organizations and has been peer reviewed by licensed mental health clinicians and law enforcement practitioners.

# THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

In 2020 and 2021, the co-occurrence of a global pandemic and civil unrest have created a perfect storm of stressors for law enforcement and all of our first responders. The combination of the stressors listed below would be challenging for anyone to manage, even those with healthy and sufficient coping skills.

## COVID-19

During the COVID-19 global pandemic, law enforcement officers have faced challenges and work environments that have pushed them to the limits. While continuing to respond to routine calls for service, officers have put themselves and their families at a higher risk for contracting COVID-19. This pandemic is stressful, unfamiliar and extraordinary; “COVID-19 must be recognized as a critical event that is likely to induce trauma responses.”<sup>1</sup> Policing protests – often times with crowds that include those who are not wearing masks – have also increased the risk of infection for law enforcement officers across the nation.<sup>2</sup> In addition to increased rates of infection, COVID-19 has resulted in:

- Increased deaths of police officers<sup>3</sup>, staff, and family members
- Disrupted family routines – childcare, education, caring for ill family members
- Decreased numbers of on-duty staff due to illness<sup>4</sup>
- Extended shift work<sup>4</sup>
- Increased exposures to COVID-19
- Reduced operating budgets<sup>5</sup>
- Heightened quarantine requirements

## FRACTURED COMMUNITY-POLICE RELATIONSHIPS

In the wake of the death of George Floyd, the nation responded with a show of activism and civil unrest that has heretofore been unmatched. Calls for defunding the police and prioritizing police reform have swept across the country. Officers working the frontlines of 1st Amendment events and protests have been required to keep the community safe, often including the very protestors who are calling for their elimination or defunding. Visceral

- 1 Drew, J. M., & Martin, S. (2020). Mental Health and Well-Being of Police in a Health Pandemic: Critical Issues for Police Leaders in a Post-COVID-19 Environment. *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being*, 5(2), 31-36. <https://doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.133>
- 2 Madrigal, Alexis C., and Robinson Meyer. “America Is Giving Up on the Pandemic.” *The Atlantic*, 7 June 2020, [www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/06/america-giving-up-on-pandemic/612796/](http://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2020/06/america-giving-up-on-pandemic/612796/)
- 3 “COVID-19: Law Enforcement Deaths.” *Police1*, 30 Apr. 2021, [www.police1.com/coronavirus-covid-19/articles/covid-19-law-enforcement-deaths-3ftkdPnVffq55iHU/](http://www.police1.com/coronavirus-covid-19/articles/covid-19-law-enforcement-deaths-3ftkdPnVffq55iHU/)
- 4 Waseem, Zoha, and Julian Laufs. “Policing a Pandemic: Impact of COVID-19 on Law Enforcement Agencies.” *Forensic®*, CL Jill Dando Institute of Security and Crime Science, 31 Aug. 2020, [www.forensicmag.com/567716-Policing-a-Pandemic-Impact-of-COVID-19-on-Law-Enforcement-Agencies/](http://www.forensicmag.com/567716-Policing-a-Pandemic-Impact-of-COVID-19-on-Law-Enforcement-Agencies/)
- 5 Ekici, Niyazi, and Dean C. Alexander. “COVID-19’s Effects on Policing.” *Security Magazine RSS*, Security Magazine, 30 July 2020, [www.securitymagazine.com/blogs/14-security-blog/post/92938-covid-19s-effects-on-policing](http://www.securitymagazine.com/blogs/14-security-blog/post/92938-covid-19s-effects-on-policing)

protest activities were aimed squarely at police officers. Law enforcement is faced with:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increased scrutiny on the institution of policing in general</li> <li>■ Negative media stories and polarizing narratives amplified on social media</li> <li>■ Calls for reform, civilian oversight, defunding and/or abolition of the police</li> <li>■ Legislation restricting or eliminating police use of force policies, procedures, and tactics, or eliminating police protections around use of force</li> <li>■ Potential elimination of qualified immunity</li> <li>■ Increase in violent crime</li> <li>■ Assaults on law enforcement officers, including shootings, projectiles thrown, use</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>of Molotov cocktails and other IEDs, lasers pointed in officers' eyes, etc.</li> <li>■ Real and perceived lack of support by police and elected officials</li> <li>■ Physical and verbal attacks on police officers and police property</li> <li>■ Lack of support from communities</li> <li>■ Online harassment of individual officers</li> <li>■ Online and in-person harassment of officers' families</li> <li>■ Protests at the homes of police chiefs and elected officials<sup>6</sup></li> <li>■ Stationhouse sieges<sup>7</sup></li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONSE TO CIVIL UNREST

The consequences of the current environment affect law enforcement officers and are compounded by the negative psychological impacts, which already exist as a side effect of this uniquely trying profession. Keep in mind of all this is occurring in the midst of a global pandemic. These consequences may include the following:

### DISRUPTIONS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Unprecedented numbers of police chief and law enforcement officer firings, unplanned or early retirements and resignations</li> <li>■ Budget cuts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Difficulty recruiting</li> <li>■ Distractions from 'crime fighting'<sup>8</sup></li> </ul> |
|---|---|

6 Ivy Rose Nightscales, Bernstein, J., Barnett, E. C., Kirlin-Hackett, B., Christopher Petroni, Kyle, Heneri, S., says: & Downey, R. (2020, August 7). Nonviolent Protests at Officials' Houses Are Protected Speech. Political Leaders Want to Shut Them Down. <https://publicola.com/2020/08/03/nonviolent-protests-at-officials-houses-are-protected-speech-political-leaders-want-to-shut-them-down/>

7 ABC News Network. (n.d.). ABC News. <https://abcnews.go.com/US/police-officers-killed-surge-28-year-point-civil/story?id=71773405>

8 Maxouris, Christina. "Police Officers across the US Have Quit Their Jobs in Recent Days. Here Is Where There Have Been Resignations." CNN, Cable News Network, 17 June 2020, [www.cnn.com/2020/06/16/us/us-police-officers-resigning/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2020/06/16/us/us-police-officers-resigning/index.html)

## OPERATIONAL IMPACTS

- Increased overtime and changes in shifts
- Decreased staffing
- Fractured community/law enforcement relations
- Lowered morale
- Limited proactivity due to fear of scrutiny

## INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

- Increased personal stress on officers and department personnel<sup>9,10</sup>
- Officer fatigue due to shift changes and other stressors
- Inability to escape the current environment:
  - 24-hour news cycle
  - Social media posts regarding current events
  - Officers are repeatedly asked their opinion on current events, both on and off duty
- Unhealthy coping mechanisms<sup>11</sup>
  - Substance abuse (both alcohol and drugs)<sup>12</sup>
  - Excessive or unhealthy eating habits
  - Extreme exercise
  - Obsessive behavior surrounding social media and mainstream news
  - Withdrawal from family, friends, peers, and/or activities once enjoyed
  - Self-destructive behavior



- 9 Bailey, Holly. "Minneapolis Police Officers Say They Are Suffering from PTSD after George Floyd Protests." The Washington Post, WP Company, 11 July 2020, [www.washingtonpost.com/national/minneapolis-police-ptsd-floyd-protests/2020/07/10/e2bbf5dc-c2fd-11ea-b4f6-cb39cd8940fb\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/minneapolis-police-ptsd-floyd-protests/2020/07/10/e2bbf5dc-c2fd-11ea-b4f6-cb39cd8940fb_story.html)
- 10 "More Cops Calling Helplines as Protests and Pandemic Add Stress." Police1, 10 Sept. 2020, [www.police1.com/health-fitness/articles/more-cops-calling-helplines-as-protests-and-pandemic-add-stress-aRQDYaB4k0KGB50/](https://www.police1.com/health-fitness/articles/more-cops-calling-helplines-as-protests-and-pandemic-add-stress-aRQDYaB4k0KGB50/)
- 11 VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, Bureau of Justice Assistance. 2018. *Understanding the Cycle of Stress and Its Associated Risk Factors Within the Law Enforcement Profession*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/669/Understanding-the-Cycle-of-Stress-and-Its-Associated-Risk-Factors-Within-the-Law-Enforcement-Profession-Poster>
- 12 The International Association of Chiefs of Police. (2020). *Preventing Suicide Among Law Enforcement Officers: An Issue Brief*. Retrieved from [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/NOSI\\_Issue\\_Brief\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/NOSI_Issue_Brief_FINAL.pdf)

## FAMILY AND SUPPORT SYSTEM IMPACT

- Fear of exposure to COVID-19<sup>13</sup>
- Additional shifts on family schedules and dynamics
- Financial strain – childcare, education, and/or tutoring costs
- Decreased support from family due to growing concerns for their officer's safety
  - Pressure from family and friends to resign early or call out sick
- Stressed interpersonal relationships
- Feelings of betrayal when anti-police sentiments are expressed by family members or friends, both in person and on social media
- Family members are anxious and unsure about how to support or talk to their family members in blue

## Some Wounds are INVISIBLE

Know the symptoms of **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)** and how to seek help through your department-directed employee assistance program.

Mental health professionals divide the symptoms of PTSD into the following categories:\*

**REEXPERIENCE:** Reexperiencing the traumatic event, causing intense emotional and physical distress. You may feel and act as if the event is recurring. Examples include:

- Nightmares
- Daytime flashbacks
- Unwanted memories, thoughts, images, or sensations
- Feelings of guilt or blame

**AVOIDANCE:** Avoiding thoughts, feelings, activities, places, and people associated with the trauma.

- Social withdrawal
- Avoiding thoughts or feelings related to the traumatic event

**AROUSAL:** Being constantly on guard, resulting in:

- Insomnia
- Irritability
- Feeling stressed and angry
- Difficulty concentrating
- Being easily startled

\*National Institute of Mental Health, <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publication/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml>

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[www.valorforblue.org](http://www.valorforblue.org)

1 – VALOR OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS PROGRAM, BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE. 2013. *SOME WOUNDS ARE INVISIBLE*. [ONLINE POSTER]. AVAILABLE FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.VALORFORBLUE.ORG/DOCUMENTS/CLEARINGHOUSE/VALOR-PTSD\\_POSTER\\_8.5X11.PDF](https://www.valorforblue.org/documents/clearinghouse/VALOR-PTSD_POSTER_8.5X11.PDF)

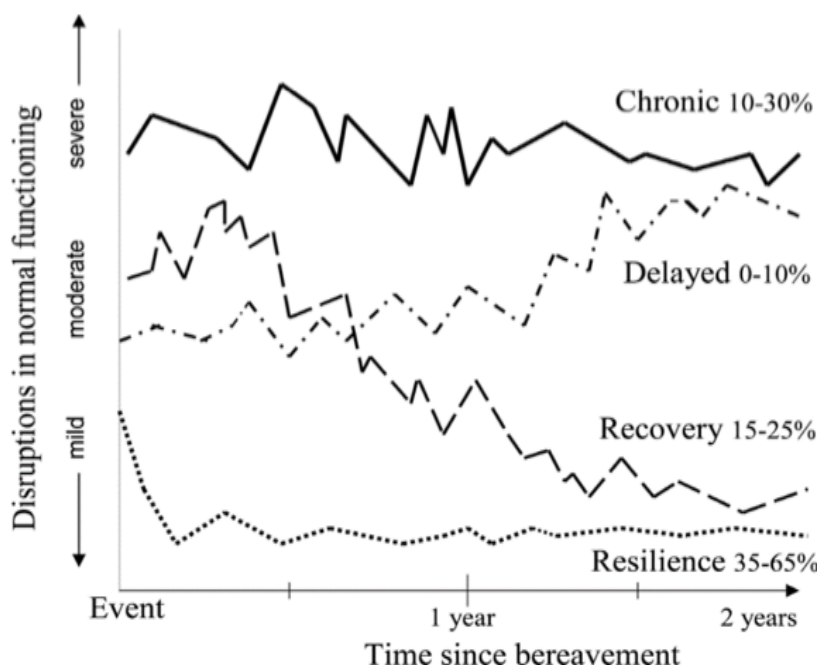
13 Stogner, John, et al. "Police Stress, Mental Health, and Resiliency during the COVID-19 Pandemic." *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, vol. 45, no. 4, 2020, pp. 718–730., [doi:10.1007/s12103-020-09548-y](https://doi.org/10.1007/s12103-020-09548-y)

# WHAT IS TRAUMA?

Trauma can mean different things to different people. You, as law enforcement officers, are exposed to traumatic situations on a regular basis. Generally, trauma can result from experiencing an event that involves:

- Actual or threatened death
- Negative life-altering event, such as a divorce, a death in the family, witnessing violence, and/or death
- Injury or threat to physical integrity

At any given time, roughly 30% of law enforcement officers are suffering from symptoms or meet the full criteria for a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).<sup>14</sup> Police officers who experience traumatic incidents are also more likely to suffer from anxiety and depression.<sup>15</sup> The types of events that can trigger trauma can range from natural disasters, acts of terrorism, motor vehicle accidents, or crowd management, among others.<sup>16</sup>

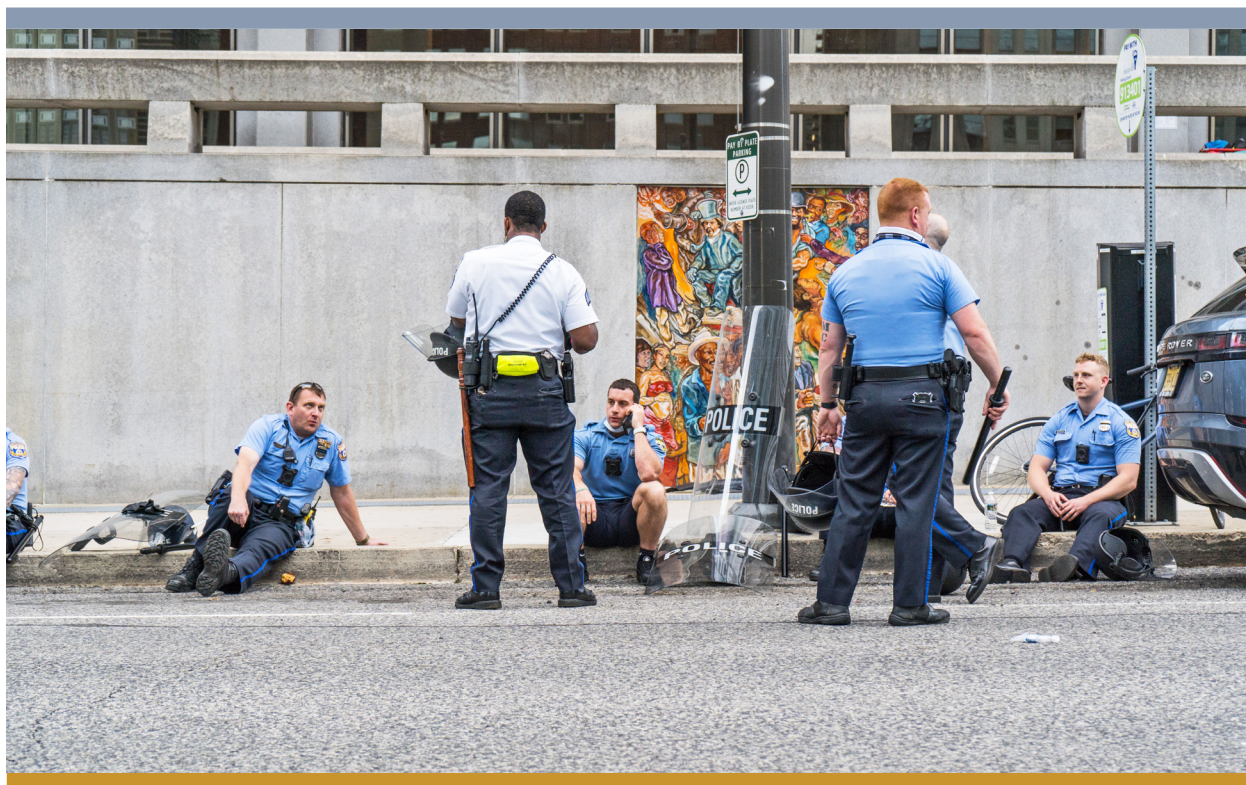


2 – THIS DIAGRAM DEPICTS DIFFERENT REACTIONS TO TRAUMA.<sup>17</sup>

14 Chopko, B. A., Palmieri, P. A., & Adams, R. E. (2018). Relationships among traumatic experiences, PTSD, and posttraumatic growth for police officers: A path analysis. *Psychological trauma: theory, research, practice and policy*, 10(2), 183–189. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000261>

15 Violanti, John M, et al. "Police Stressors and Health: a State-of-the-Art Review." *Policing* (Bradford, England), U.S. National Library of Medicine, Nov. 2017, [pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30846905/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30846905/)

16 Stump, Chief Dan (Ret.), and Sergeant Matt Faulk. "Debriefing Trauma." VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program, Sept. 2020, <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1328/Debriefing-Trauma>



## REACTION TO TRAUMA

You may react differently to traumatic events than others; and reactions can manifest themselves in a number of ways.<sup>17</sup> Some victims of trauma experience only minimal reactions, including minor changes in sleep or appetite. Others encounter more distressing effects, like Acute Stress Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).<sup>18,19</sup> Still others may push through the trauma aftermath to achieve resilience and recovery.

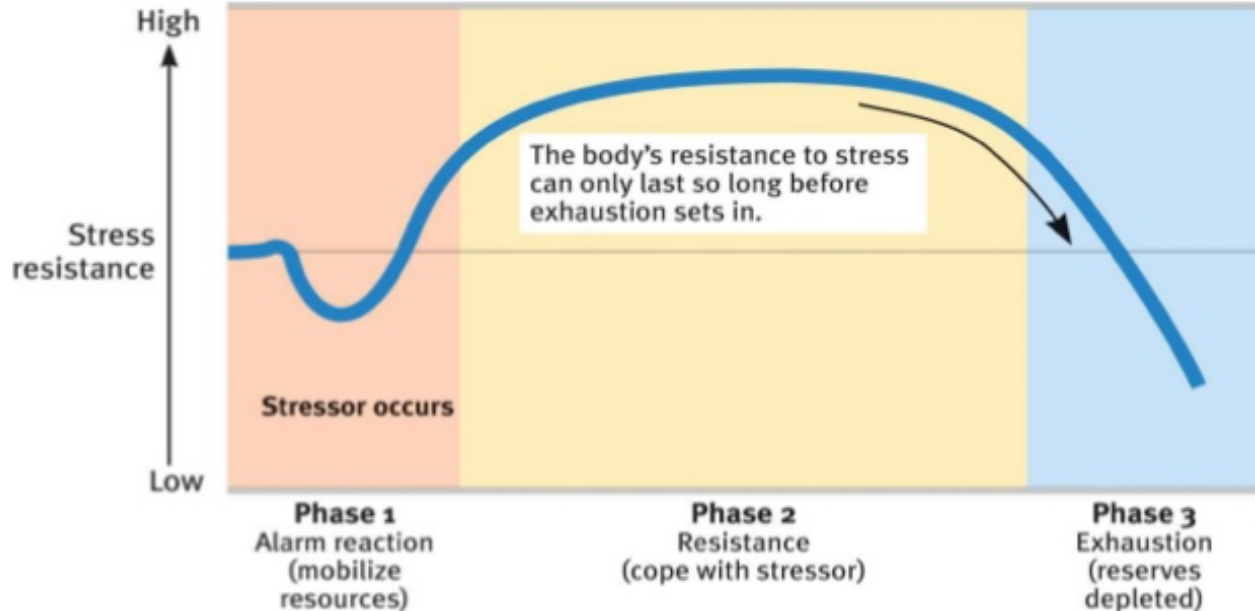
But here's the good news. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, "while most but not all traumatized people experience short term symptoms, the majority do not develop ongoing (chronic) PTSD."<sup>20</sup> Four categories of symptoms that an individual will experience when suffering from PTSD include re-experiencing, avoidance, arousal and reactivity, and cognition and mood.<sup>20</sup> It is important to note that signs and symptoms of PTSD may not occur for weeks or even months after the traumatic incident takes place.<sup>20</sup> It is also important to note that there are a number of treatment and management options available; there is help for you.<sup>20</sup> Individuals with PTSD can seek treatment through medication options, psychotherapy (which can include exposure therapy, cognitive restructuring, and/or talk therapy), or a combination of these techniques.<sup>20</sup>

17 Bonanno, George & Mancini, Anthony. (2012). Beyond Resilience and PTSD: Mapping the Heterogeneity of Responses to Potential Trauma. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*. 4. 74-83. 10.1037/a0017829

18 National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program. 2020. *While We Have You . . . Let's Talk About PTSD*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1357/While-We-Have-You-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-PTSD->

19 National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program. 2020. *Got A Minute? Let's Talk About PTSD*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1352/Got-A-Minute?-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-PTSD->

20 "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder." National Institute of Mental Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml)



3 – THIS DIAGRAM DEPICTS THE 3 PHASES OF GENERAL ADAPTATION SYNDROME (GAS).<sup>21</sup>

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT STRESS

Stress comes from how you interpret or think about what is happening to you. It's not necessarily what's happening—or even what has already happened. It's the meaning your mind has assigned to the stressful event that causes the burden to amplify. Stress reactions are unique to the person experiencing them, so what causes stress in one person won't necessarily cause stress or the same level of stress in another.

### GENERAL ADAPTATION SYNDROME (GAS)

General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) was originally identified by Hans Selye.<sup>21</sup> GAS is otherwise known as the "stress response."<sup>21</sup> Dr. Selye has written numerous works discussing the components of the GAS stages and some supplements that could be beneficial in reversing the harmful effects of a stress response.<sup>21</sup> The three phases of GAS are the Alarm Phase, Stage of Resistance, and Stage of Exhaustion.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> "General Adaptation Syndrome Stages, Phases & Model - Sanesco." Sanesco Health, 8 Apr. 2020, [sanescohealth.com/blog/general-adaptation-syndrome-stages/](https://sanescohealth.com/blog/general-adaptation-syndrome-stages/)

SENSES AND PERCEPTION SHARPEN. TIME APPEARS TO SLOW DOWN

BODY SWEATS IN ORDER TO KEEP COOL DURING EXERTION AND MAKES YOU HARDER TO GRAB

HORMONES ARE RELEASED THAT MAKE BLOOD STICKIER SO YOU BLEED LESS

DIGESTION STOPS AND BLOOD IS DIVERTED FROM GUT TO ARMS AND LEGS



BLOOD FLOWS TO MUSCLES AND MAKES THEM TENSE AND READY FOR ACTION

HEART BEATS FASTER INCREASING BLOOD PRESSURE PREPARING YOU FOR PEAK EXERTION

BREATH COMES MORE RAPIDLY OXYGENATING BLOOD FOR FIGHT OR FLIGHT

URINATION OR BOWEL EMPTYING. THE BODY'S WAY OF MAKING SOMEONE LIGHTER SO AS TO RUN FASTER

4 – THIS DIAGRAM DEPICTS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR BODY ENGAGES ITS “FIGHT OR FLIGHT” RESPONSE.<sup>22</sup>

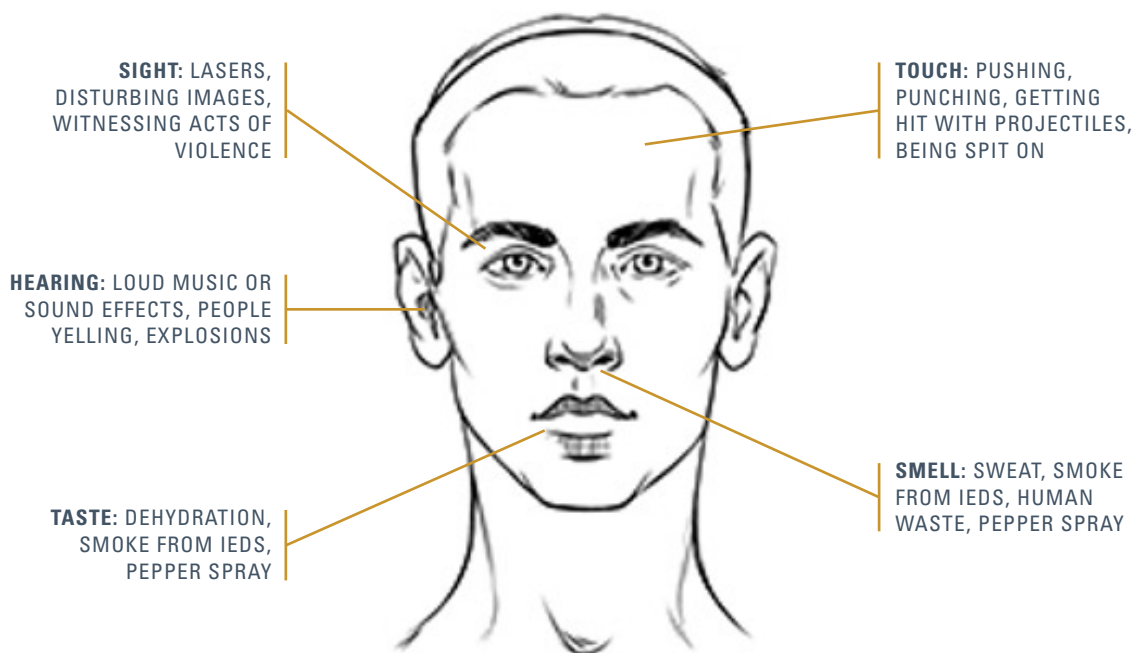
## THE ANATOMY OF STRESS<sup>22</sup>

As officers, you are physically and emotionally tested during events such as protests, civil unrest, mass demonstrations or 1st Amendment assemblies; you, your colleagues, and other first responders are also often the last to seek help for work-related stress.<sup>23</sup> Warning signs of stress during high intensity situations may include:

- Experiencing elevated heart rate, palpitations, muscle tension, headaches, and tremors.<sup>23</sup>
- Feeling anger, frustration, fear, terror, or danger.<sup>23</sup>
- Feeling disorientation or confusion; difficulty with problem-solving or decision-making.<sup>23</sup>
- Taking unnecessary risks, failing to use personal protective equipment, or refusing to follow orders or leave the scene.<sup>23</sup>
- Becoming irritable or hostile in social situations, resorting to blaming, and failing to support teammates.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Anatomy of Stress, courtesy of Sgt. (Ret.) Nancy Rosado, New York Police Department.

<sup>23</sup> “Warning Signs and Risk Factors for Emotional Distress.” SAMHSA, [www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline/warning-signs-risk-factors](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline/warning-signs-risk-factors)



5 – THIS DIAGRAM DEPICTS SENSORY STRESSORS WHICH OFFICERS MAY EXPERIENCE DURING MASS DEMONSTRATIONS.<sup>24</sup>

Stress and trauma in the field, particularly while policing protests, demonstrations, and 1st Amendment assemblies, can be amplified by the overall attack on the senses and the sensory confusion<sup>24</sup>, which you may experience in these tumultuous situations.

## MANAGING STRESS

Managing reactions to critical stress requires you to recognize that you are experiencing stress, and then, practice techniques which will help to reduce stress. These techniques are commonly referred to as self-care.<sup>25</sup>

There also are some things you can do to help manage your symptoms, including:

- Talking with your doctor about treatment options.<sup>26</sup>
- Setting realistic goals for yourself.<sup>26</sup>
- Breaking up large tasks into small ones, setting some priorities, and doing what you can, as you can.<sup>26</sup>

24 Sensory Stressors in Mass Demonstrations, courtesy of Christine Johnson, National Police Foundation.

25 VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, Bureau of Justice Assistance. 2020. *Stress Reduction—3 Things You Can Do to Reduce Negative Impacts of Stress*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1349/Stress-Reduction%E2%80%943-Things-You-Can-Do-to-Reduce-Negative-Impacts-of-Stress>

26 “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.” National Institute of Mental Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/index.shtml)

- Spending time with other people and confiding in a trusted friend or relative.<sup>26</sup>
- Telling others about things that may trigger symptoms.<sup>26</sup>
- Expecting your symptoms to improve gradually, not immediately.<sup>26</sup>
- Identifying and seeking out comforting situations, places, and people.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, this guidebook will explore other steps that officers, supervisors, and organizational leaders can all take to address trauma and stress.

Take long term steps to  
**reduce stress**  
 and increase your health!

- ▶ Get 6 to 8 hours of restful sleep each night.
- ▶ Develop a network of friends in which to confide.
- ▶ Limit consumption of nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol.
- ▶ Practice deep-breathing exercises, yoga, meditation, etc.
- ▶ Develop cognitive reframing techniques.
- ▶ Use exercise as a means to relieve stress.



Learn more at  
[www.valorforblue.org/sos](http://www.valorforblue.org/sos)

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6 – VALOR OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS PROGRAM,  
 BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE. N.D. *REDUCE STRESS*.  
 [ONLINE POSTER]. AVAILABLE FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.  
 VALORFORBLUE.ORG/DOCUMENTS/CLEARINGHOUSE/VALOR-  
 REDUCE STRESS\\_%20POSTER\\_8\\_5X11.PDF](https://www.valorforblue.org/documents/clearinghouse/valor-reduce-stress_%20POSTER_8_5X11.PDF)

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FRONTLINE OFFICERS

## GENERAL SELF-CARE TECHNIQUES

Self-care varies for different people<sup>27</sup>, but in general, self-care techniques should address your physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional needs.<sup>28</sup>



Eat regularly



Spend recreational time with others



Exercise regularly



Build and maintain significant relationships



Engage in hobbies and recreational activities



Take vacations



Practice relaxation and stress management techniques



Find a common community



Contribute to causes or volunteer

27 Sandman, Cpt. Janet (Ret.). Seven Ways to Alleviate Stress - VALOR for Blue, 5 June 2020, <https://www.valorforblue.org/Blog/25/Seven-Ways-to-Alleviate-Stress>

28 "Stress Inoculation—Healthy Habits." VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program, Dec. 2020, <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1346/Stress-Inoculation%E2%80%94Healthy-Habits>

# MAINTAINING STRONG PHYSICAL HEALTH

Maintaining focus on physical wellness before, during, and after policing 1st Amendment events and civil unrest can help keep your body and mind healthy. To ensure physical safety and wellbeing, you should strive to do the following:

- Keep up with tactical proficiencies and defensive tactics skills.<sup>29,30</sup>
- Request to have a safety officer on the line during protests.
- Keep a trauma kit<sup>31</sup> or “go-bag” handy and at the ready.<sup>32</sup>
- Be on the lookout for yourself and fellow officers; pull each other off the line if you notice it’s time for a break.<sup>33</sup>
- Protect each other during protests, off the line, and off-duty. If you notice a colleague in physical distress, on the line or off, encourage him or her to seek assistance, or help the officer do so.

## DON PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is essential to ensure that you and other first responders can perform their duties safely. Protests and 1st Amendment assemblies introduce a need for enhanced PPE, such as body armor, shields, helmets, and facemasks. Further, the need for PPE is even greater as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. You are now required to wear PPE, which complies with CDC guidelines around community health concerns.

## GOOD NUTRITION IN HIGH STRESS POLICE OPERATIONS

High stress police operations, such as crowd management during periods of civil unrest, is mentally and physically demanding. Crowd management often challenges you to push your body beyond normal limits without leaving recovery time, leading to poor performance, fatigue, insomnia, and injury. In the summer of 2020, you and your fellow officers repeatedly worked shifts that, in many cases, exceeded 12 hours for 10 to 12 days straight, leaving little time and few safe locations for appropriate nutrition, rest, exercise, recovery, or sleep.

29 “Polis Solutions: T3 - Tact, Tactics, and Trust.” Polis Solutions, Inc., 2021, <https://www.polis-solutions.net/t3>

30 “ADAPT.” Polis Solutions, Inc., 2021, <https://www.polis-solutions.net/adapt>

31 “Essential Casualty Care Equipment for Your Go-Bag.” VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, 20 Mar. 2018, <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/190/Essential-Casualty-Care-Equipment-for-Your-Go-Bag>

32 VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, Bureau of Justice Assistance. (2016). *TCCC Trauma Bag Recommendations*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Documents/Clearinghouse/TraumaBagPoster.pdf>

33 Police Executive Research Forum. 2018. *The Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Large numbers of arrests, long periods on bicycles, standing or moving in formations, and responding to threats are physically and mentally demanding tasks. Nutrition is an important factor in the successful performance of these demanding police operations.<sup>34</sup> While you're assigned to crowd management, you must be focused and prepared to carry out your assignments in uncertain and volatile operating environments.

Some considerations during high stress operations:

- Given the intensity of the assignment and limited food choices, you may find yourself relying on caffeine, nicotine, and fast foods. These poor dietary habits can lead to performance issues, which cannot be resolved by “cramming” healthy nutrition.
- Weather also plays a significant role, particularly heat, which can cause you and your fellow officers to lose body weight due to sweat in a matter of hours, resulting in dehydration. These environmental exposures can inhibit physical readiness and effectiveness if nutritional needs and hydration are not properly met.<sup>35</sup>
- The effects of weather are often exacerbated by personal protective equipment.
- Poor nutrition, under-eating, and dehydration can all contribute to fatigue, impaired performance, and even injury. Further, improper eating is detrimental to overall health.<sup>35</sup>
- If possible, plan to eat prior to night shift operations to prevent fatigue.<sup>35</sup>
- High-intensity situations require higher levels of food and water intake.<sup>35</sup>
- High-protein foods rebuild and repair body tissues after high-output scenarios.<sup>35</sup>
- Always be mindful of caffeine and nicotine intake. Caffeine and nicotine lead to increased blood pressure, which can increase anxiety, especially in high stress situations.<sup>35</sup>

## OVERCOMING NUTRITION CHALLENGES

- Try to eat healthy foods versus pre-packaged or fast food prior to, during, and immediately after intense physical activities. If possible, bring snacks of fruits and nuts or performance sports nutrition products, such as energy gels, bars, and drinks. Foods such as sport drinks, raisins, honey, bananas, or potatoes are ideal for recovery.<sup>35</sup>
- Drink one to two cups of fluid every 30 minutes even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Increasing caloric intake can also help to replenish fluid loss.
- Snacks for night shifts should be low carbohydrate/high protein foods.<sup>35</sup>
- Foods that are high in water, like fruit, are great for warmer weather.<sup>35</sup>
- High carbohydrate snacks are beneficial to consume when working in the cold.<sup>35</sup>

34 The International Association of Chiefs of Police. (2018). *Supporting Officer Safety through Family Wellness: Nutritional Needs*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/t2018-09/Axon%20Family%20Wellness-Nutrition.pdf>

35 Deuster, Patricia A., et al. The Special Operations Forces Nutrition Guide. 2017, [navyseals.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/special-operations-nutrition-guide.pdf](http://navyseals.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/special-operations-nutrition-guide.pdf)



## EXERCISE

The importance of exercise stems far beyond being physically fit; exercise also helps encourage physical preparedness for situations, such as crowd management and policing in mass demonstrations and protests. Staying physically fit aids in protecting you from injury, improving flexibility and balance, and increasing endurance levels.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, maintaining regular exercise programs can help reduce stress, anxiety, anger, and depression. All of these outcomes can only serve to better prepare you for dealing with the chaos and exhaustion that can come with policing in mass demonstrations.

- Exercise is a mood enhancer. Even moderate exercise, such as brisk walking, releases chemicals known as endorphins, which reduce pain and stress.
- Thirty minutes of moderate exercise releases endorphins, providing many physical and emotional benefits when done regularly.

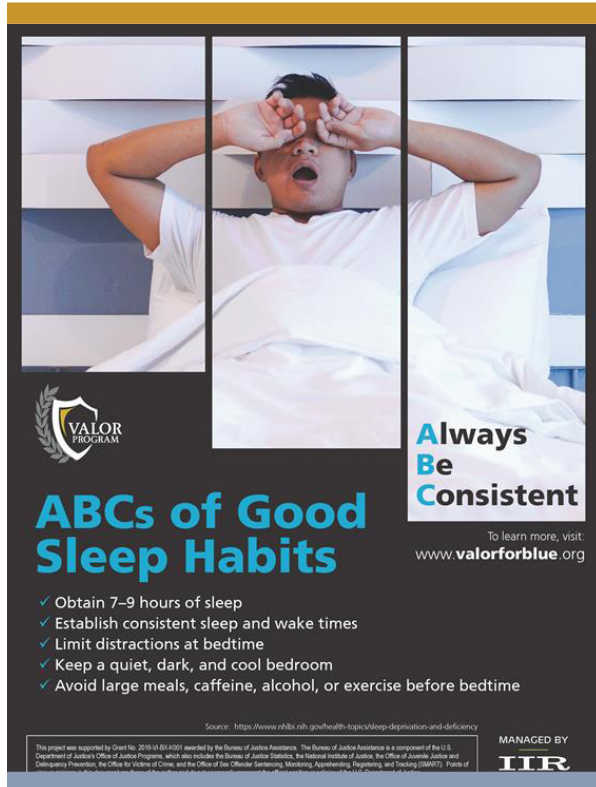
## SLEEP TACTICS FOR SUSTAINED HIGH STRESS POLICE OPERATIONS

Sleep is critical for sustaining the mental agility you need for success during crowd management and other high stress operations.<sup>37</sup> Even simple tasks such as driving, communicating, and maintaining alertness can be impaired by inadequate sleep (anything less than seven – nine hours every 24 hours).<sup>38</sup> Planning for sleep is an individual

36 "Physical Health." Physical Health - VALOR for Blue, VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, <https://www.valorforblue.org/Spotlight-on-Safety/PhysicalHealth#PhysicalReadiness>

37 "VALOR Voices Podcasts The Benefits of Sleep." VALOR Voices - The Benefits of Sleep - VALOR for Blue, VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, <https://www.valorforblue.org/eLearning/The-Benefits-of-Sleep>

38 Valor Officer Safety and Wellness Program. (2019). *Don't Skimp on Sleep*. [Online poster]. Available from: [https://valorfiles.blob.core.windows.net/documents/Clearinghouse/poster\\_sleep\\_bac%208.5x11.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&sig=%2FCwkqPpSyfjHs2sY015x4SRwKqhRdp9069R4KPZ555o%3D&se=2021-03-03T16%3A14%3A06Z&sp=r](https://valorfiles.blob.core.windows.net/documents/Clearinghouse/poster_sleep_bac%208.5x11.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&sig=%2FCwkqPpSyfjHs2sY015x4SRwKqhRdp9069R4KPZ555o%3D&se=2021-03-03T16%3A14%3A06Z&sp=r)



7 – VALOR OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS PROGRAM. (2020). *ABCs OF GOOD SLEEP HABITS*. [ONLINE POSTER]. AVAILABLE FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.VALORFORBLUE.ORG/CLEARINGHOUSE/1201/ABC-S-OF-GOOD-SLEEP-HABITS](https://www.valorforblue.org/clearinghouse/1201/abc-s-of-good-sleep-habits)

and organizational priority. In a 2014 study, over 50% of police officers examined were found to have poor sleep quality.<sup>39</sup>

A 2012 study examined the impact of shift lengths on police officers’ performance, sleep, health, and quality of life. It found that there are “disadvantages related to 12-hour shifts, including greater reported levels of sleepiness and lower levels of alertness while at work as compared to those on 8-hour shifts. Because past researchers have indicated that people underestimate their fatigue levels (e.g., Rosekind & Schwartz, 1988), this finding should be reason for further concern.”<sup>40</sup> Additionally, “given the prior warnings by researchers related to fatigue in positions of public security, agencies should be concerned with managing fatigue in extended shifts, particularly those of 12- hours or more, inclusive of overtime work.”<sup>40</sup>

Civil unrest can create situations where inadequate sleep becomes the norm. When you and your fellow officers do not get enough sleep, you accumulate a sleep debt that must be paid off

but realistically cannot be made up. Therefore, it is critical that you make sleep a top priority as possible.

Inadequate sleep impairs the following abilities, among others:

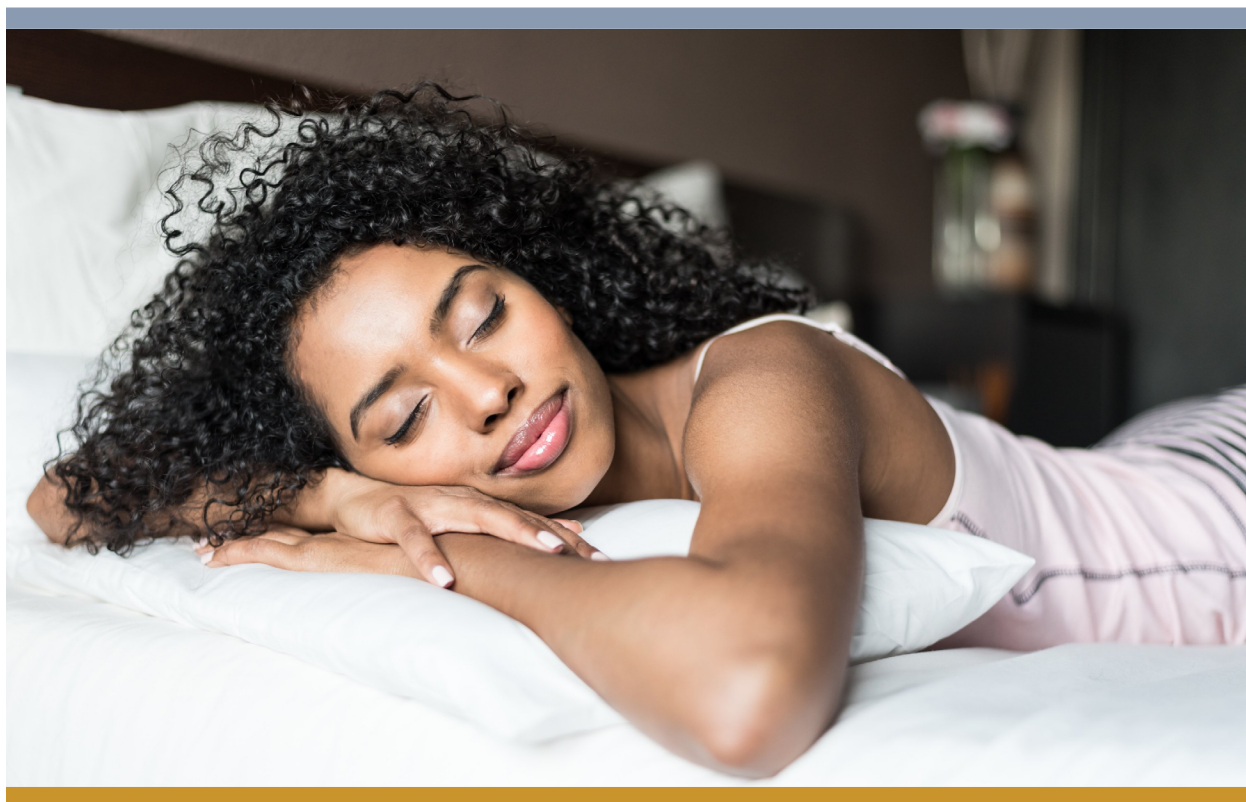
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduced ability to judge and understand the environment</li> <li>■ Depleted situational awareness</li> <li>■ Decreased ability to concentrate<sup>41</sup></li> <li>■ Diminished decision-making skills<sup>42</sup></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Inefficient coordination of team and individual tactics</li> <li>■ Ineffective use of de-escalation skills</li> <li>■ Increased risk of stress-related injuries</li> </ul> |
|--|---|

39 Hartley, Tara A, et al. “Association Between Police-Specific Stressors and Sleep Quality: Influence of Coping and Depressive Symptoms.” *Journal of Law Enforcement Leadership and Ethics*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, Mar. 2014, [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5418587/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5418587/)

40 Amendola, Ph.D., Karen L, et al. *The Impact of Shift Length in Policing on Performance, Health, Quality of Life, Sleep, Fatigue, and Extra-Duty Employment*. June 2012, [www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/237331.pdf](http://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/237331.pdf)

41 VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program. (2020). *Sleep Well, Be Well*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/clearinghouse/1202/Sleep-Well-Be-Well>

42 VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program. (2020). *Wake Up to the Facts*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/clearinghouse/1200/Wake-Up-to-the-Facts>



## SIGNS OF INSUFFICIENT SLEEP

- Struggling to stay awake while driving to and from work, during breaks, or on the line<sup>43</sup>
- Attention lapses
- Irritability, decreased initiative, or limited motivation
- Difficulty understanding or tracking information

## TYPES OF SLEEP PROBLEMS

- Difficulty falling asleep
- Difficulty staying asleep
- Nightmares (especially COVID-19 nightmares: bringing it home, having a fever, among others)
- Panic attacks in sleep
- Feeling exhausted even after sleeping

43 National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program. (2020). *Got A Minute? Let's Talk About Sleep*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1350/Got-A-Minute?-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-Sleep->

## OVERCOMING SLEEP DEPRIVATION WHILE MAINTAINING SHIFT WORK<sup>44</sup>

In less than perfect situations, such as when you are working overtime or maintaining shift work, and you're not able to go home to get a good night's sleep, try to:

- Nap, when possible, to get periods of rest/sleep, especially if it is not possible to get seven – nine hours of sleep within a 24-hour period to make up for the deficit. To reach this quota, it's helpful for departments to create “nap rooms” or make other spaces available for you.
- Restrict caffeine intake as much as possible.
- Increase healthy food intake (see nutrition guidelines above).
- Limit alcohol intake when off-duty.
- Get as much sleep as possible when off-duty.
- Avoid television and cell phones (or any form of blue light) at least one hour before bed when preparing for sleep. Viewing social media in these turbulent times can exacerbate sleep issues.
- Maintain exercise routines as much as possible.
- Use melatonin if you find it works for you.

## SLEEP HYGIENE IN OPTIMAL SITUATIONS

In ideal circumstances, you'll be able to practice healthy sleep hygiene and avoid significant sleep deficits. To increase beneficial sleep habits, consider the following best practices:

- Maintain a regular sleep schedule.
- Try to avoid naps.
- Don't stay in bed awake for more than 15 minutes.
- Don't watch TV or read tablets or phones in bed.
- Avoid caffeinated drinks within three hours of bedtime.
- Exercise at least three hours before bedtime.
- Have a quiet, cool, and comfortable bedroom.

## SLEEP AND ALCOHOL

- Alcohol is not a sleep aid. Too much alcohol will cause you to pass out – that is not sleeping.
- Alcohol interrupts the circadian rhythm of sleep. You may “fall asleep” quickly but will wake up in the middle of the night; sleep will not be restful.
- Alcohol blocks REM sleep (dreaming), the most restorative type of sleep. With less REM sleep

<sup>44</sup> The International Association of Chiefs of Police. (2018). *Supporting Officer Safety through Family Wellness: The Effects of Sleep Deprivation*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/Axon%20Family%20Wellness-Sleep%20Deprivation.pdf>



from alcohol, you will wake up groggy.

- Alcohol intake means more trips to the bathroom. Alcohol is a diuretic – meaning the need to empty the bladder more interrupts your sleep.

## SUBSTANCE AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

### HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN DRINKING IS A PROBLEM?

Some warning signs include:

- Drinking more than usual or more often
- Drinking to improve a bad mood
- Making bad choices when drinking
- Drinking enough to cause problems
- Showing up late or missing work due to drinking or the after-effects of drinking
- Making all social events center around drinking

Using the CAGE Screening Tool<sup>45</sup> is a subjective way of determining if you're using alcohol in an abusive or excessive manner:

- Have you ever felt you should **CUT DOWN** on your drinking?
- Have you ever felt **GUILTY** about your drinking?
- Have you felt **ANNOYED** when others criticize your drinking?
- Have you ever experienced an **EYE-OPENER** moment about your drinking, like realizing you need a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or soothe a hangover?

45 Johns Hopkins Healthcare. (n.d.) *CAGE Substance Abuse Screening Tool*. [Online poster]. Available from [https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns\\_hopkins\\_healthcare/downloads/all\\_plans/CAGE%20Substance%20Screening%20Tool.pdf](https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/johns_hopkins_healthcare/downloads/all_plans/CAGE%20Substance%20Screening%20Tool.pdf)

CAGE stands for **C**ut down, **A**nnoyed, **G**uilty, and **E**yeopener.<sup>45</sup> If you believe you have a drinking problem, or if you believe a fellow officer might have a problem, seek help from a trusted source, and refer to the section below titled “Dealing with Alcohol Abuse.”

## DEALING WITH ALCOHOL ABUSE

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Seek professional assistance</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Practice sleep hygiene to sleep better</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Minimize or totally avoid social situations, which provide access to unhealthy substances</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Confide in a friend who will be supportive</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Identify and minimize stress triggers</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Find healthy coping mechanisms such as meditating, stretching, listening to music, reading, and exercising</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Develop an exercise regimen</li> </ul>   |  |

## REGULAR WELLNESS VISITS WITH YOUR DOCTOR

It’s often the last priority in our busy routines, but maintaining regular check-ups with your doctor is vital. A quick visit helps monitor and treat any potential health issues before they become too serious. Particularly for those who encounter such high levels of occupational stress, having a good baseline understanding of your health is crucial to understanding your limits. Keeping up with vaccines, medications and treatments will help keep you and your fellow officers healthy.

# MAINTAINING STRONG MENTAL HEALTH

Maintaining focus on mental health and physical wellness before, during, and after response to civil unrest can help keep your mind healthy during these difficult times. Stress can negatively impact your physical, psychological, and emotional health.<sup>46</sup> Stress makes it difficult to think clearly, react appropriately, and regulate your emotions, particularly in dynamic situations such as 1st Amendment demonstrations and civil unrest. It is important to acknowledge stress as soon as possible,<sup>47</sup> while it’s happening, and to take action to mitigate its negative impacts.

During demonstrations, when situations are intensifying and emotions are rising, you can implement some of the following relaxation techniques:

46 VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program. (2018). *Building Resilience*. [Online poster]. Available from: [https://www.valorforblue.org/Documents/Clearinghouse/VALOR-Build\\_Resilience\\_85x11.pdf](https://www.valorforblue.org/Documents/Clearinghouse/VALOR-Build_Resilience_85x11.pdf)

47 National Suicide Awareness for Law Enforcement Officers Program. (2020). *While We Have You . . . Let’s Talk About Stress*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1356/While-We-Have-You-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-Stress->

- Perform breathing exercises through a “body scan”, which entails “a few minutes of deep breathing...focus[ing] on one part of the body or group of muscles at a time and mentally releasing any physical tension you feel there;” or a repetitive prayer.<sup>48</sup>
- Know when it’s time to step away from the frontline (based on departmental policy) if things are getting too intense.<sup>49</sup>
- Watch for other officers and pull them off the line if you notice it’s time for a break due to heightened emotions.<sup>50</sup>
- Employ the “buddy system;” when a situation involving your “buddy” is deteriorating, check in and tap each other out.
- Protect each other during protests, off the line, and off-duty. If you notice a colleague in need of help, encourage your fellow officer to seek assistance, or seek out resources to give to your colleague and offer to be there with them when reaching out.
- Take decompression breaks during a protest, preferably in a designated area where there is a physical, non-human barrier between the area and the protest. If possible, establish this zone prior to the event.

## CLEARING YOUR MIND (MEDITATION, MINDFULNESS, AND OTHER METHODS)

Learning to clear your mind can provide autonomy over your thoughts and emotions and give you a greater sense of control. This is commonly referred to as mindfulness, which is defined as, “moment to moment, nonreactive, nonjudgmental awareness.”<sup>50</sup> The most popular way to practice mindfulness is meditation, during which a person is aware of, and acknowledges, their thoughts and emotions as they happen.<sup>50</sup> This process can lead to reductions in anxiety and depression, PTSD symptoms, negative health outcomes, and even addictive behaviors. All of this results in increased resilience and emotional intelligence.<sup>50</sup> Ways to clear your mind include:

- When arriving home from work, safely store your service weapon(s), change your clothes, and take a “tactical pause”<sup>51</sup> to transition from work to home.
- Take the time to clear your mind. Consider strategies such as deep breathing or meditation. There are also many different apps which provide a number of helpful strategies to relax and clear away stress.
- Take a walk outside. Walking is a good form of exercise, and walking in nature (rather than an urban environment) has additional benefits. A 20- to 30-minute walk in a natural environment decreases physical and emotional stress and improves cognitive functioning.
- Journaling is also an effective method of relaxation and decompression.

48 Publishing, Harvard Health. “Six Relaxation Techniques to Reduce Stress.” Harvard Health, [www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/six-relaxation-techniques-to-reduce-stress](http://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/six-relaxation-techniques-to-reduce-stress)

49 Police Executive Research Forum. 2018. The Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

50 Kim, John H. Mindfulness: The Next Frontier of Battling Officer Stress, Dec. 2017, [https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/12-2017/Mindfulness\\_Next\\_Frontier\\_of\\_Battling\\_Officer\\_Stress.html](https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/12-2017/Mindfulness_Next_Frontier_of_Battling_Officer_Stress.html)

51 Coates, Crawford (2019). Mindful Responder: The First Responder’s Field Guide to Improve Resilience, Fulfillment, Presence, & Fitness – On & Off the Job. Glen Ellyn, IL.: Calibre Press

- Music therapy and comedy can also provide much-needed moments of levity.
- Regardless of the method, take the time to decompress between work and home.

## MAINTAINING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND SPENDING TIME WITH LOVED ONES

In times of stress, many react by internalizing, shrinking away from support systems, and self-isolating, yet these are the times when reaching out is more crucial than ever. Spending time with your friends, family, colleagues, or teammates can “recharge” your emotional batteries. Loved ones want to provide you with the support you need; allow them to do this. Invest in healthy, productive relationships that replenish rather than deplete you.

## FOSTER A POSITIVE OUTLOOK

- When under extreme stress, it is often hard to notice positive events that are also occurring.
- Taking time to reflect on the positives in your life can help you keep your perspective in stressful times.
- Try writing one positive thing about your life on a slip of paper every day. Keep the slips in a jar or box, and when you’re feeling stressed, read the slips and remember how many positive things there are in your life.
- In addition to slips of paper, fill the box with pictures of your family, friends, pets, relaxing vacations, or other personal reminders.



When your well is empty and you are tapped out, you have nothing left to give. **Tap into your healthy support systems** to help fill your reserves.

Peers • Mentors • Chaplains • Counselors  
Psychological help experienced in working with law enforcement

Let us help replenish your well. View the Stress Reduction Foundational Video Series at [SAFLEO.org](https://www.safleo.org).

MANAGED BY **IIR** This project was supported by Grant No. 2018-VKXK002 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Managing, and Tracking (SMART). Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Justice.

8 – VALOR OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS PROGRAM. (2020). *STRESS REDUCTION - TAP THE WELL*. [ONLINE POSTER]. AVAILABLE FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.VALORFORBLUE.ORG/CLEARINGHOUSE/1348/STRESS-REDUCTION%E2%80%94TAP-THE-WELL](https://www.valorforblue.org/clearinghouse/1348/STRESS-REDUCTION%E2%80%94TAP-THE-WELL)

- Slips of paper and pictures are no substitute for real life interactions and activities. Working overtime can limit the ability to interact with your loved ones. When possible, make the time to reconnect with your family and friends. Even short intervals of time, such as date night with your spouse/partner, game night with the family, or an afternoon with friends, can go a long way toward maintaining healthy relationships at a time when you need it most.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MID-LEVEL SUPERVISORS: THE LINCHPINS OF SAFETY AND WELLNESS

This guide defines Sergeants and Corporals as mid-level supervisors. The individuals who occupy these ranks are especially crucial to the overall formula for officer safety and wellness. Mid-level supervisors are the intermediary between frontline officers and executive leadership; you are the pass through for communications regarding overall organizational health, the foremost needs of your officers, and requests which might help alleviate some of the stresses that your officers face daily. Aside from being required to effectively advocate for your officers, mid-level supervisors should also not only talk the talk but also walk the walk when it comes to health and wellness.

As a supervisor, you should lead by example and put a premium on your own health and wellness. Your attitude can also communicate that there's no stigma associated with seeking assistance when needed. Check in with your officers constantly, and ensure they are getting the support they need. Emphasize the need to take action in fostering one's own physical and mental wellness. The support system that you regularly provide your officers as a mid-level supervisor needs to be put into overdrive during difficult times. Perhaps it would be helpful to share this guide and its resources with your officers to provide information and to open the door for communication, dialogue, and reflection.

Other ways you can serve as a good example in health and wellness are to:

- Maintain focus on your own health and wellness, and that of your family
- Respect your officers' boundaries; if they are off duty, don't contact them and let them have the day to decompress
- Place priority on your officers' health and wellness; especially during times of increased tension and stress
- Talk about physical health, mental health, and emotional wellness, often and openly
- Monitor your staff for any changes that seem out of the ordinary
- Take action when needed
- Recognize and account for potential obstacles for your officers who are seeking and receiving help, and mitigate these obstacles

## SUPPORTING YOUR OFFICERS' HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN TIMES OF HIGH STRESS

During these uncertain times, it's important to acknowledge that stressors exist. You and other law enforcement leadership must promote an atmosphere where officers feel they can speak to a supervisor, a peer support team

member, or a provider through the department’s employee assistance program. The only mistakes you can’t fix are the ones you don’t know about. As a leader, you should encourage everyone to take their time off when it is available and to reach out for help if and when they need it.

## PREPARING FOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLNESS IN THE FRAY

There are multiple things that you, as mid-level supervisors, can do for your officers prior to and during an event to set them up for success in terms of safety and wellness:

- Train your officers often. Take advantage of every moment to review protocols for responding to and working a mass demonstration (for example, during roll call).
- Speak to the importance of being familiar with and knowledgeable about department protocols, as being well prepared can reduce stress.
- Emphasize the need for your officers to take care of themselves through exercise, good nutrition, intentional self-care, and healthy sleep hygiene.
- If possible, ensure that the line is staffed appropriately and that officers are given regular breaks.
- If available, request the presence of a safety officer on behalf of your line officers.
- Make the rounds and safely check in with your officers on the line.
- Remind your officers to keep up with eating and hydrating on the line and, if possible, provide them accommodations to do so.
- Remind your officers of the importance of the “buddy system.” Tell them to look after one another and step in if needed.
- Train your officers to stay “left of bang,”<sup>52</sup> by identifying some of the pre-event indicators that exist before an incident occurs and by intervening.

## RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF STRESS IN YOURSELF OR YOUR OFFICERS

Remind your officers there is strength in recognizing and admitting they need help; there is courage in seeking out that help. However, it is also important for public safety “families” to take care of each other. This not only means supporting one another, but also pointing out and acknowledging changing and/or risky behavior in your fellow officers. If you notice an officer in need of help, talk with them. As a leader to your officers, you should be able to pull them aside and check in. Provide opportunities for dialogue by saying things like:

- “Today/tonight was really rough. How are you holding up?”
- “I’ve noticed you seem upset; do you want to talk about it?”

52 “Getting Left of Bang: The Next Level of Tactical Awareness.” Police1, 13 Nov. 2015, [www.police1.com/officer-safety/articles/getting-left-of-bang-the-next-level-of-tactical-awareness-weFrGYNy50cZwdPd/](http://www.police1.com/officer-safety/articles/getting-left-of-bang-the-next-level-of-tactical-awareness-weFrGYNy50cZwdPd/)

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■ “Do you need anything?”

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■ “How can I help?”

As always, encourage your officers to seek assistance, but if they seem unwilling, offer to look into resources for them, and offer to be there with them when reaching out for services. If you feel comfortable doing so, share an instance where you needed help and sought it out, and give an example of how it helped you address some of the stress you had been experiencing prior. Your officers look to you not only for orders but also for examples, answers, and advice; letting them know they are not alone and that you’re there to help them can go a long way.



## SUDDEN CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR<sup>53</sup>

There are several indicators to look for when determining whether one of your officers may need assistance. These behaviors should not be ignored and could mean something is wrong:

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■ Increased “sick days”

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■ Poor work performance

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■ Avoidance of work altogether, certain job requirements, or types of calls

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■ Sudden talk of quitting

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■ Avoidance of home

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■ Requesting additional shifts or excessive amounts of overtime

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■ Decreased social interactions

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■ Increased anger and irritability

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■ Increased alcohol use

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■ DUI or other offenses

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<sup>53</sup> The International Association of Chiefs of Police. (2020). *Mental Wellness, Resiliency, and Suicide Prevention Information for Family and Friends of Law Enforcement*. [Online poster]. Available from: <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Suicide%20prevention%20brochure%202020.pdf>

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP

This guide defines Lieutenants, Captains, Commanders, Chiefs, Commissioners, Sheriffs, and Superintendents as executive and senior leadership. The individuals who occupy these ranks represent the entire organization, its culture, and its value system. The focus on physical and mental wellness must be ingrained in your agency, and also in all of your actions. Messaging about the importance of wellness cannot be a “check-the-box” activity. Your organization must live and breathe the tenets of officer safety and wellness, and it all starts with you. Establishing a sound foundation of wellness within your organization prior to a traumatic or stressful event, such as a mass demonstration or protest, will allow your officers to approach the event with a healthy mindset and react appropriately during the event itself. After the event, they will be able to come to terms with and hopefully resolve the stresses and trauma they endured.

## PREPARING FOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLNESS IN THE FRAY

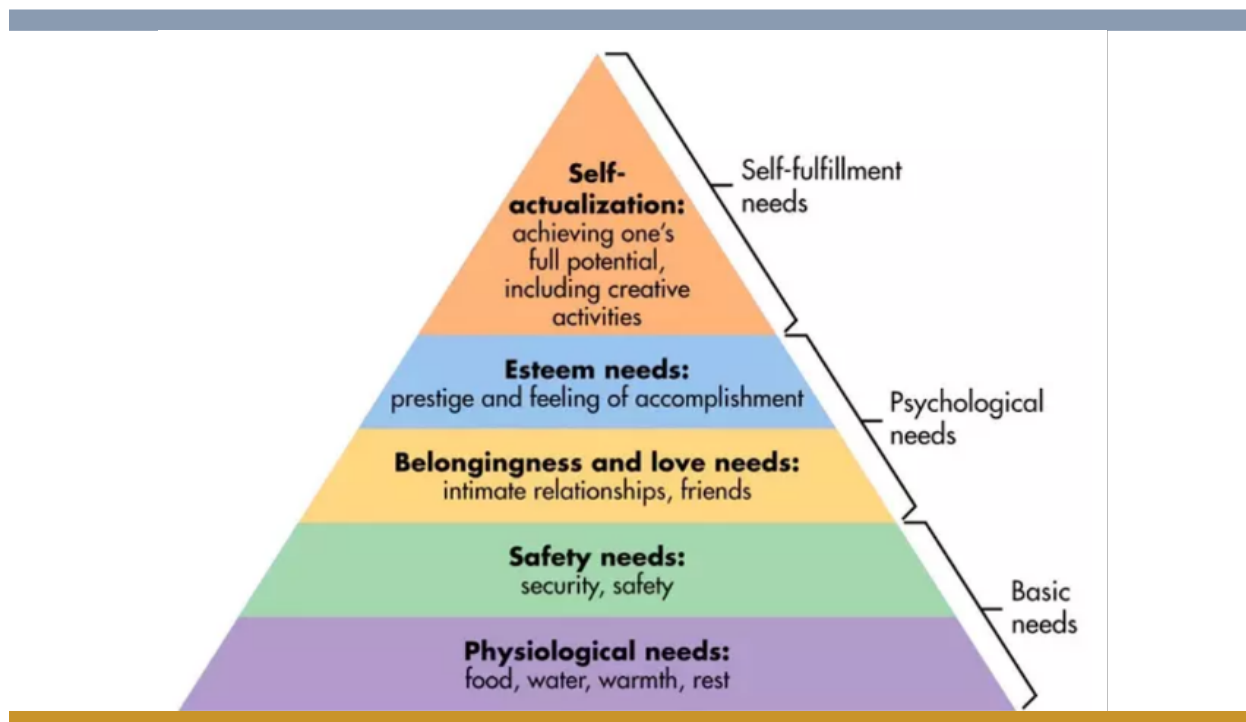
There are multiple things that you, as police organization senior leaders, can do prior to and during an event to set your officers up for success in terms of safety and wellness.<sup>54</sup>

- Prepare for days off for your officers following response to intense incidents.<sup>54</sup>
- Have food and water on premises during the response.<sup>54</sup>
- Keep your officers assigned to the same posts every day or night, if possible, “so they have familiarity with their assignments and patrol area.”<sup>54</sup>
- Assign someone to check patrol areas ahead of time for potential projectiles that could be used against your officers.<sup>54</sup>
- Designate safety officers who are always monitoring their fellow officers; if they notice someone is being specifically targeted or showing signs of stress, they should pull them from the line and rotate someone else in immediately.
- Ensure that there are higher levels of supervision during protests to ensure that everyone remains calm.<sup>54</sup>

When planning and implementing support for your officers and other agency staff during times of protest, it may be helpful to consider Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs,<sup>55</sup> which states that basic needs must be met before any others to build upon as a foundation of health and wellness. This consideration should be something that all department heads must account for in any agency operations plan, no matter the event. As executive and senior

54 Police Executive Research Forum. 2018. The Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

55 Mcleod, Saul. “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.” Simply Psychology, Simply Psychology, 29 Dec. 2020, [www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html#gsc.tab=0](http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html#gsc.tab=0)



9 – THIS DIAGRAM DEPICTS MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS.<sup>55</sup>

leaders, you should also equip your mid-level supervisors with the resources and understanding to assist with addressing these needs (this includes any necessary training that clearly establishes your expectations).

## PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS

- Provide food by having energy bars and other healthy snacks available.
- Confirm that there are hydration stations or another form of access to water.
- Ensure your officer have access to restrooms; consider partnering with the local fire department for use of their canteen truck.
- Provide sources of warmth, or in warmer weather, provide access to SPF, cooling stations, or misting fans.
- Afford opportunities for rest, including decompression break zones for officers (preferably with a barrier between this zone and the protest), rotating officers off of the line at set intervals of time, and adhering to general orders for break times.
- Determine whether it's possible to establish a secure sleep station for officers who are on break if the event is set to last through multiple shifts.
- Recognize the importance of maintaining healthy sleep-work cycles of your officers, particularly when your officers are working:
  - In high stress environments
  - Outside of regular assignments
  - Extended shifts
  - On regularly scheduled days-off

## SAFETY NEEDS

- Ensure your officers have access to the appropriate PPE for the event.
- Create a non-human barrier between protesters and your officers when possible.
- Rely on mutual aid as much as possible to provide an extra layer of support and security for your officers; have a plan in place ahead of time to avail your department of this resource.
- Coordinate with local EMS to have them stationed in the vicinity for assistance. Make officers aware of their presence and location.
- Place a high priority on the security of your stationhouse.
- Determine whether your officers can be transported to and arrive at the scene in unmarked cars for their safety.
- Assess whether or not a line of officers is actually needed on scene. Determine if it's possible to mobilize close by without activating. Stay ready in the event that the situation escalates.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER FROM AN ADMINISTRATIVE STANDPOINT

There are a number of steps that law enforcement leaders and supervisors can take in creating an executive operations plan. Many strategies can be put in place to bolster the overall culture of wellness:

- **Potential partnerships:** Unions can provide support in many ways, including canteen trucks (fire departments as well); auxiliary chapters that are run by families can provide food and drinks to officers; police foundations can collect donations on behalf of the department to fund things like PPE; local gyms, fire departments, and/or state police facilities can provide access to exercise equipment or even shower and restroom facilities during officers' breaks; local massage parlors or massage schools can offer treatments for officers during breaks as well.
- **Shift work:** When possible, administrators should avoid putting officers on rotating shifts, particularly during times of high stress.
- **Exercise:** Are officers permitted to work out on duty, during roll call, or on breaks? Is there enough space in the roll call room for activities?
- **Relaxation and sleep:** Is there a meditation room in the department where your officers can decompress on breaks? Are officers permitted to take naps on breaks? If possible, bring in massage chairs or white noise machines to provide an increased sense of calm.
- **Training:** It's vital to have a plan in place before an event occurs. The entire agency should be trained and up to date on what needs to happen if the plan is put into action.
- **Environment:** Humor is proven to help

relieve stress, anxiety, and depression.<sup>56</sup> Taking a step as simple as playing a comedy movie instead of the news in the station can ease the tension of a stressful day. Use your intelligence staff as much as possible; if they can provide well-vetted information to officers about what's going on, it could minimize the amount of time officers spend looking at mainstream news and social media, reducing anxiety.

- **In-house Support:** If financially feasible, there should be an in-house peer support team or on-call counselor available to staff at all times.

## SUPPORTING HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

- Maintain open dialogue through surveys, conversations, and focus groups.
- Give your employees the confidence to raise concerns or to offer suggestions.
- Reassure your employees that there will be no punishment or negative career impact associated with seeking help or expressing mental health support needs.
- Build organizational resilience.<sup>57,58</sup>
- Create and support a culture of health and wellness.<sup>59</sup>



10 – VALOR OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS PROGRAM. (2020). *SEEKING HELP IS A SIGN OF STRENGTH 2*. [ONLINE POSTER]. AVAILABLE FROM: [HTTPS://WWW.VALORFORBLUE.ORG/CLEARINGHOUSE/1306/SEEKING-HELP-IS-A-SIGN-OF-STRENGTH-2](https://www.valorforblue.org/clearinghouse/1306/seeking-help-is-a-sign-of-strength-2)

- Acknowledge that much is being asked of your officers and staff; show appreciation for their efforts and the sacrifices that their families are making as well.
- Use your platform to create a positive narrative.

56 S. Marlon Gayadeen Scott W. Phillips , (2016), "Donut time: the use of humor across the police work environment", Journal of Organizational Ethnography, Vol. 5 Iss 1 pp. 44 - 59

57 Bouthillette, Chief John, and Deputy Chief Paul Sandman. "Agency Planning and Support for Employee Crisis." VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, 2019, <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1071/Agency-Planning-and-Support-for-Employee-Crisis>

58 The International Association of Chiefs of Police. (2020). *Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention*. [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/NOSI\\_Framework\\_Final%20%28002%29.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/NOSI_Framework_Final%20%28002%29.pdf)

59 VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program. (2020). *Resiliency Initiatives for Agencies*. [Online poster]. Available from: [https://valorfiles.blob.core.windows.net/documents/Clearinghouse/valor-resiliency\\_initiative\\_for\\_agencies-poster.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&sig=LLiYKkKrRLMbYbkOumyGcOP3xgvZiXNMICpsBUNQHk%3D&se=2021-03-03T16%3A55%3A02Z&sp=r](https://valorfiles.blob.core.windows.net/documents/Clearinghouse/valor-resiliency_initiative_for_agencies-poster.pdf?sv=2017-04-17&sr=b&sig=LLiYKkKrRLMbYbkOumyGcOP3xgvZiXNMICpsBUNQHk%3D&se=2021-03-03T16%3A55%3A02Z&sp=r)

- Implement programs that support this wellness culture:
  - Agency-level Health and Wellness Coordinator
  - Mental Health Incident Commander
  - Peer Support Team
  - Family Peer Support Team
  - Well-vetted, culturally competent mental health practitioners with experience and expertise in managing first responder mental health

- Be a good example by maintaining your own mental and physical health. Consider sharing your journey with your staff.
- Seek public and private partnerships that can establish support programs and services.
- Recognize and support your officers' support systems (families, friends, and peers).

## SUPPORTING YOUR OFFICERS AFTER THE FACT

After a stressful event, several things can help to ensure the continuity of health and wellness in your organization:

- Debrief and publicly recognize the stressful events and situations that have impacted your staff; for example the unprecedented levels of stress that 2020, COVID-19, protests, and demonstrations have placed on everyone.
- Ensure that there is a mental health service provider immediately available to your officers, preferably on scene or at least in the stationhouse. Emphasize that this support is available to all staff and their families.<sup>60</sup>
- Acknowledge how these extraordinary events may impact your officers differently and recognize that it's normal and understandable.<sup>60</sup>
- Reassure everyone that they have continual access to support and wellness resources.

- Remind your officers and staff that there are also informal means of support, such as a peer support team.<sup>60</sup>
- Consider making confidential mental health check-ins mandatory to minimize the stigma associated with engaging in these sessions.<sup>61</sup>
- Make short- and long-term counseling available to families as well as officers during times of protest and remind officers of the availability of these services often.<sup>61</sup>
- Encourage your mid-level supervisors to keep a closer eye on your officers.<sup>60</sup>
- Be aware of and acknowledge “milestones” (one week out, one month out, one year out from an extraordinary event), and understand that some of your officers will want these commemorated, and some will not.

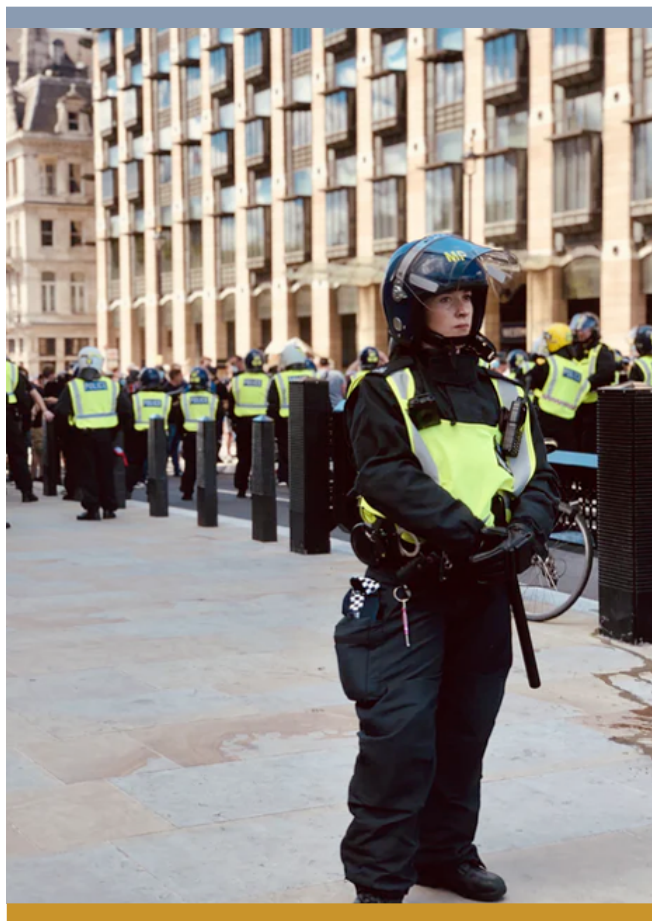
60 Usher, Laura, Stefanie Friedhoff, Sam Cochran, and Anand Pandya. 2016. Preparing for the Unimaginable: How Chiefs Can Safeguard Officer Mental Health Before and After Mass Casualty Events. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

61 Police Executive Research Forum. 2018. The Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

- Anticipate potential triggers and try to prepare your officers to tackle these.<sup>60</sup>
- Never stop communicating the importance of mental health and wellness and the value you place in this pillar of your organization.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Protests, demonstrations, and civil unrest can be volatile and unpredictable situations that can last for hours, days, or weeks. All of this, in addition to the normal occupational stressors that come along with being a law enforcement professional, is causing stress and fatigue in our officers. Stress, exhaustion, and unpleasant feelings are all normal and even expected. This guide is meant to provide considerations to help leaders, supervisors, and officers maintain their staff's wellness – both physical and mental – as a focal point. At the end of this guide, you will also find [Appendix A](#), which provides a list of resources that your agencies and officers can access to bolster what has been discussed in this guide.



## REMEMBER

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

**ASK FOR HELP.**

**TAKE CARE OF COLLEAGUES, TAKE CARE OF YOUR FAMILIES, AND TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE. BE SAFE AND BE WELL.**

# APPENDIX A: VALOR INITIATIVE PARTNER OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

## BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE (BJA) RESOURCES

- Law Enforcement Officer Safety and Wellness Resource Page: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/law-enforcement-officer-safety-and-wellness/overview>
- VALOR Initiative Page: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/valor/overview>
- Bureau of Justice Assistance Law Enforcement Officer Safety and Wellness Surge Effort Page: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Valor-Resources/Surge#all>

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE (IACP) RESOURCES

- IACP Officer Safety and Wellness Resource Page: [www.theiacp.org/OSW](http://www.theiacp.org/OSW)

## CAREER RESILIENCY

- Enhancing Officer Wellness and Resiliency in Policing: [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Enhancing%20Officer%20Wellness%20and%20Resiliency%20in%20Policing%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Enhancing%20Officer%20Wellness%20and%20Resiliency%20in%20Policing%20(1).pdf)
- Mastering Work-Life Balance: <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Mastering%20Work%20Life%20Balance.pdf>
- Supporting Officers After the Badge: Considerations for Officer Retirement: [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/246191\\_IACP\\_Officer\\_Retirement\\_p5.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/246191_IACP_Officer_Retirement_p5.pdf)
- Supporting Officers After the Badge: The Impact of Retirement on Law Enforcement Families: <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Officer%20Retirement%20Impact%20on%20Family.pdf>

## INFOGRAPHIC SERIES

- Helping Your Young Child Understand Your Job: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/document/supporting-officer-safety-through-family-wellness-helping-your-child-understand>
- Discussing Your Job With Your Teen: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/supporting-officer-safety-through-family-wellness-discussing-your-job-with-your-teen>
- Injury Reduction: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/supporting-officer-safety-through-family-wellness-injury-reduction>
- Nutritional Needs: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/document/supporting-officer-safety-through-family-wellness-nutritional-needs>

[wellness-nutritional-needs](#)

- Financial Literacy: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/document/supporting-officer-safety-through-family-wellness-financial-literacy>
- Estate Planning: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/supporting-officer-safety-through-family-wellness-estate-planning>
- The Effects of Sleep Deprivation: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/document/supporting-officer-safety-through-family-wellness-the-effects-of-sleep>

## FACT SHEETS

- Community-Police Engagement: How Law Enforcement Parents Can Talk to Their Children About Current Events: [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/243807\\_IACP\\_OSW\\_CPE\\_Talk\\_to\\_Children\\_3%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/243807_IACP_OSW_CPE_Talk_to_Children_3%20(1).pdf)
- Eating Well On-The-Go: How Agencies Can Provide Education and Support to Improve Officer Nutrition and Well-Being: <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2018-09/eating%20well%20on%20the%20go.pdf>

## REPORTS, GUIDES, AND TOOLS

- Employee and Family Wellness Guide: <https://www.theiacp.org/resources/document/employee-and-family-wellness-guide>
- Mental Wellness, Resilience, and Suicide Prevention Brochure: <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/Suicide%20prevention%20brochure%202020.pdf>
- Comprehensive Framework for Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention (NOSI Resource): [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/NOSI\\_Framework\\_Final%20%28002%29.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-11/NOSI_Framework_Final%20%28002%29.pdf)
- Strategies for Safe and Positive Messaging (NOSI Resource): [https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/244736\\_IACP\\_NOSI\\_Messaging\\_p7.pdf](https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/244736_IACP_NOSI_Messaging_p7.pdf)
- OVC Law Enforcement Vicarious Trauma Toolkit: <https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/tools-law-enforcement>
- Law Enforcement Agency and Officer Resilience Training Program (VALOR Resource): <https://www.theiacp.org/projects/law-enforcement-agency-and-officer-resilience-training-program>

## INSTITUTE FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH (IIR) — BJA VALOR OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS PROGRAM RESOURCES

- VALOR Program Website: <https://www.valorforblue.org>
- ABC's of Good Sleep Habits: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1201/ABCs-of-Good-Sleep-Habits>
- Agency Planning and Support for Employee Crisis: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1071/Agency-Planning-and-Support-for-Employee-Crisis>
- Are You Carrying Your Tourniquet?: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/560/Tourniquet-Poster>
- Be Part of the Solution: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1323/Be-Part-of-the-Solution>
- Behind Closed Doors: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/497/Behind-Closed-Doors>

- Break the Silence: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1325/Break-the-Silence>
- Building Resilience: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/567/Building-Resilience>
- Building Resilience for Officers: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/569/Building-Resilience-for-Officers>
- Crisis to C.A.L.M.: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1361/Crisis-to-C-A-L-M->
- Critical Incidents and Post-Traumatic Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1217/Critical-Incidents-and-Post-Traumatic-Stress>
- Debriefing Trauma: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1328/Debriefing-Trauma>
- Don't Skimp on Sleep: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/983/Don%E2%80%99t-Skimp-on-Sleep>
- Essential Casualty Care Equipment for Your Go-Bag: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/190/Essential-Casualty-Care-Equipment-for-Your-Go-Bag>
- Five Myths About Mindfulness Meditation: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Blog/24/Five-Myths-About-Mindfulness-Meditation>
- From Crisis to C.A.L.M.-Control Your Emotions: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1363/From-Crisis-to-C-A-L-M-%E2%80%94Control-Your-Emotions>
- From Crisis to C.A.L.M.-Provide Alternatives for a Peaceful Resolution: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1365/From-Crisis-to-C-A-L-M-%E2%80%94Provide-Alternatives-for-a-Peaceful-Resolution>
- From Crisis to C.A.L.M.-Use Active Listening: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1364/From-Crisis-to-C-A-L-M-%E2%80%94Use-Active-Listening>
- Got A Minute? Let's Talk About PTSD: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1352/Got-A-Minute?-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-PTSD->
- Got a Minute? Let's Talk About Sleep: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1350/Got-A-Minute?-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-Sleep->
- Got A Minute? Let's Talk About Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1351/Got-A-Minute?-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-Stress->
- Mitigating the Negative Effects of Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/566/Mitigating-the-Negative-Effects-of-Stress>
- Negativity Bias: Is That a Rock or a Lion Behind That Bush?: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Blog/27/Negativity-Bias-Is-That-a-Rock-or-a-Lion-Behind-That-Bush>
- Post Critical-Incident Stress Management: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1225/Post-Critical-Incident-Stress-Management>
- Post Critical-Incident Trauma Care: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1230/Post-Critical-Incident-Trauma-Care>
- Reduce Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/571/Reduce-Stress>
- Resilience Initiatives for Agencies: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/570/Resilience-Initiatives-for-Agencies>
- Seeking Help is a Sign of Strength 2: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1306/Seeking-Help-is-a-Sign-of-Strength-2>
- Seven Ways to Alleviate Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Blog/25/Seven-Ways-to-Alleviate-Stress>
- Sleep Well, Be Well: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1202/Sleep-Well-Be-Well>

- Smash the Stigma: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1303/Smash-the-Stigma>
- Some Wounds Are Invisible: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/14/Some-Wounds-Are-Invisible-Poster>
- Spotlight on Safety - Diet and Nutrition: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Spotlight-on-Safety/PhysicalHealth#PhysicalReadiness>
- Spotlight on Safety - Fitness: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Spotlight-on-Safety/PhysicalHealth#PhysicalReadiness>
- Spotlight on Safety - Physical Readiness: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Spotlight-on-Safety/PhysicalHealth#PhysicalReadiness>
- Stress Inoculation - Healthy Habits: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1346/Stress-Inoculation%E2%80%94Healthy-Habits>
- Stress Inoculation - Healthy Support: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1347/Stress-Inoculation%E2%80%94Healthy-Support>
- Stress Reduction - Tap the Well: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1348/Stress-Reduction%E2%80%94Tap-the-Well>
- Stress Reduction - 3 Things You Can Do to Reduce Negative Impacts of Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1349/Stress-Reduction%E2%80%943-Things-You-Can-Do-to-Reduce-Negative-Impacts-of-Stress>
- Surviving Organizational Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1218/Surviving-Organizational-Stress>
- TCCC: Trauma Bag Recommendations - Are You Prepared?: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/747/TCCC-Trauma-Bag-Recommendations>
- The Benefits of Sleep: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/182/The-Benefits-of-Sleep>
- There is Hope: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1386/There-is-Hope>
- Understanding the Cycle of Stress and Its Associated Risk Factors Within the Law Enforcement Profession: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/669/Understanding-the-Cycle-of-Stress-and-Its-Associated-Risk-Factors-Within-the-Law-Enforcement-Profession-Poster>
- Wake Up to the Facts: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1200/Wake-Up-to-the-Facts>
- While We Have You... Let's Talk About PTSD: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1357/While-We-Have-You-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-PTSD>
- While We Have You... Let's Talk About Stress: <https://www.valorforblue.org/Clearinghouse/1356/While-We-Have-You-Let%E2%80%99s-Talk-About-Stress>

## POLIS SOLUTIONS, INC. RESOURCES

T3 - Tact, Tactics, and Trust is a BJA-approved curriculum, which addresses multiple issues related to officer safety and wellness that are relevant to mass demonstrations, protests, and 1st Amendment Assemblies: <https://www.polis-solutions.net/t3>

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ADAPT is a new program based on the concept that the foundation of officer safety is the ability to adapt decisively to dynamic circumstances and conditions. This program was developed under the BJA VALOR Initiative: <https://www.polis-solutions.net/adapt>

Polis Patrol Expert is a digital resource to build scenarios that address key concerns related to stress management and officer wellness: <https://polispatrolexpert.com/>

## UCF RESTORES RESOURCES

UCF RESTORES provides guidance on coping with stress, healthy sleeping, sadness and depression, and stress and anger management: <https://ucfrestores.com/resources/stress-management/>

## VIRGINIA CENTER FOR POLICING INNOVATION (VCPI) RESOURCES

Measuring What Matters Web-Based e-Guide (MWM e-Guide): <https://www.vcpionline.org/measuring-what-matters/>



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## APPENDIX B: ABOUT THE NATIONAL POLICE FOUNDATION

The National Police Foundation (NPF) is a non-partisan and non-membership 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to advancing the impact and delivery of police services through reforms and enhancements guided by innovation and science. For the last 50 years, the Foundation has led the development of research on all aspects of policing and leads the way in promoting and sharing evidence-based practices and innovation among law enforcement. The Foundation works with communities across the U.S. and internationally to provide research, training, and technical assistance relating to community engagement and problem solving, promoting safety, and healthy organizations and officers, the reduction and prevention of violence, and equitable and fair justice for all. For more information, please visit the National Police Foundation website at [www.policefoundation.org](http://www.policefoundation.org).

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## APPENDIX C: ABOUT THE BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) helps to make American communities safer by strengthening the nation's criminal justice system. Its grants, training and technical assistance, and policy development services provide state, local, and tribal governments with the cutting edge tools and best practices they need to reduce violent and drug-related crime, support law enforcement, and combat victimization.

BJA is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office for Victims of Crime, and Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. To learn more about BJA Programs, follow us on visit [www.bja.gov](http://www.bja.gov), or follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/DOJBJA](https://www.facebook.com/DOJBJA)) and Twitter ([@DOJBJA](https://twitter.com/DOJBJA)).

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## APPENDIX D: ABOUT THE VALOR OFFICER SAFETY AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE

The Officer Robert Wilson III Preventing Violence Against Law Enforcement Officers and Ensuring Officer Resilience and Survivability (VALOR) Initiative is an effort to improve the immediate and long-term safety, wellness, and resilience of our nation's law enforcement officers. Through a multifaceted approach that includes delivering no-cost training (professional education), conducting research, developing and providing resources, and establishing partnerships that benefit law enforcement officers, the VALOR Initiative seeks to provide our law enforcement with innovative, useful, and valuable resources and skills.

VALOR continuously evolves to confront the many complex issues, concerns, and trends that law enforcement officers face and to integrate the latest research and practices to address all aspects of officer safety, wellness, resilience, and performance. The nature of all of these critical, ongoing issues are ever-changing; many times, being driven by local, state, and national events. This can have a direct effect on an officer's ability to prevent or survive the rigorous challenges and threats that she or he may face in the line of duty.

The Department of Justice and the Bureau of Justice Assistance are dedicated to helping our law enforcement officers and the communities they serve stay safe and well. Because officer safety and community safety are intrinsically bound, requiring a strong and positive partnership, the VALOR Initiative provides a comprehensive approach to addressing law enforcement officers' needs and to building those strong and positive partnerships with the communities they serve. The VALOR Initiative supports our law enforcement through its programs that address the following topics:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ■ Comprehensive Officer Safety and Wellness | ■ Roadway Safety for Law Enforcement   |
| ■ Law Enforcement Resilience                | ■ Officer Safety and Wellness Research |
| ■ Law Enforcement Suicide Prevention        | ■ Strengthening Partnerships           |

To learn more, click here: <https://bja.ojp.gov/program/valor/overview>

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# APPENDIX E: NPF STAFF MEMBERS

## CHRISTINE JOHNSON, PROJECT ASSOCIATE, LOCAL PROGRAMS

Christine Johnson is a Project Associate at the National Police Foundation, supporting the VALOR officer safety project. Prior to joining the National Police Foundation, Christine served as the Strategic Analysis Specialist for the DC Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) from 2016 to 2020. In this role, she was responsible for facilitating data sharing agreements, as well as establishing partner agencies' access to the CJCC's information sharing database, JUSTIS. She also took on project management duties with respect to the agency's two grant-funded initiatives through BJS's NCHIP (National Criminal History Improvement Program), which implemented information sharing infrastructure between the District of Columbia and the FBI. Finally, Christine guided the agency's effort to organize and update the JUSTIS System Security and Privacy Plan, to remain in compliance with federal information security standards.

## PAULINE ALVARADO, PROJECT ASSOCIATE, LOCAL PROGRAMS

Pauline Alvarado is a Project Associate at the National Police Foundation. Pauline's previous criminal justice, government, and nonprofit experience encompasses analytical and project management roles at the Council of State Governments Justice Center, Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, and White House Office of Management and Budget. Pauline has co-authored reports, designed government agency dashboards, overhauled grant reporting information systems, and consulted on data visualizations, all in the spirit of leveraging practical criminal justice policy and science to advance data-informed decision-making. Pauline earned a Master of Science in Criminology and Master of Public Administration from the University of Pennsylvania and a B.A. in Mass Communications from the University of California, Berkeley. Her accolades include a mayoral appointment as the Seattle Human Rights Commission Co-Chair (2016-2017) and Lipman Family Prize Fellowship (2017-2018) at the Wharton School for global social impact and philanthropy.

## JENNIFER ZEUNIK, DIRECTOR, LOCAL PROGRAMS

Jen Zeunik is the Director of Local Programs for the National Police Foundation, where she provides leadership and oversight for the organization, as well as project, financial and staff management. She has extensive experience in public administration, law enforcement organizations and practices, non-profit management, government grants and contracts and organizational leadership. She is responsible for PF's portfolio of state and local programs, including critical incident and after-action reviews, organizational assessments and studies, strategic planning, management studies, training and technical assistance and other organizational change services. Throughout her career, Ms. Zeunik has worked closely with a variety of stakeholder organizations in policing program and policy areas. She works with federal, state and local executives, law enforcement and public safety command staff to leverage evidence-based strategies to address critical contemporary policing issues. Her goal is to advance the health, safety and performance of law enforcement officers and organizations and the communities they serve by providing evidence-based, data-supported resources and solutions.

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## **CHIEF (RET) FRANK STRAUB, PH.D., DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR MASS VIOLENCE RESPONSE STUDIES**

Chief (Ret) Frank Straub, Ph.D. is the Director of the National Police Foundation's Center for Mass Violence Response Studies (CMVRS). Under his leadership, the NPF has conducted in-depth studies of targeted mass violence events in San Bernardino, Kalamazoo, Orlando, Parkland, and the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. He has also led reviews of the police response to civil unrest in several cities. It was under his leadership, that the NPF began including mental health practitioners on its review teams to ensure counseling services or referrals were available to responders, survivors and witnesses. Dr. Straub is the project manager for the national Averted School Violence project, a national database, funded by the US Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. He has also led a DHS funded Countering Violent Extremism project in Boston, MA. Prior to joining the National Police Foundation, Dr. Straub served for more than 30-years in federal, state and local law enforcement.